



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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News

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Subsistence Migratory Bird Hunting Opens for 2003

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management Council (AMBCC) announced today that new regulations to open the 2003 migratory bird subsistence hunt will be published in the Federal Register on July 21, 2003.

The remainder of the 2003 subsistence season will run through August 31 in most areas of the state. Additional guidance, including areas open to subsistence harvest, a list of species that can be taken, and a description of legal means and methods of take, will be included in the 2003 migratory bird subsistence hunt regulations. The regulations are also included in a booklet that is being mailed to all post office box holders in the subsistence-eligible areas.

The Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council, which includes representatives from the Alaska Native community, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acting as equal partners, was formed in 2000 with the specific purpose of developing "recommendations related to the spring/summer subsistence harvest of migratory birds." More information on the history and goals of the Council, as well as the 2003 regulations (following Monday's Federal Register publication), can be found online at <http://alaska.fws.gov/media/ambcc.html>.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 542 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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